

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 NEW DE 13894 130845Z
ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 MCE-00 EB-08 ACDA-12 SAA-01
(ISO) W
-----025978 141801Z /73

R 130600Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO CINCPAC
INFO CDRUSACSG FT SHAFTER HI
JCS WASHDC
SECSTATE WASHDC 3933
COMIPAC HONOLULU HI
CSA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

S E C R E T NEW DELHI DELHI 13894

JCS FOR J5

CDRUSACSG FOR MOCG-OP/SP

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: MILI, IN
SUBJECT: GOI REQUEST FOR TOW ANTI-TANK MISSILE
CONTRACTOR BRIEFING (U)

REF: A. CINCPAC DTG 092130Z SEP 78 (NOTAL)
B. USDAO NEW DELHI DTG 241216Z MAY 78, IR 6844 0174
78 (NOTAL)
C. NEW DELHI ODC 13569, DTG 070554Z SEP 78

1. AS CINCPAC HAS SUGGESTED IN ITS MESSAGE TO JCS (REF A)N
EMBASSY DOES BELIEVE THAT POLITICAL FACTORS OUTWEIGH MORE NAR-
ROW MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS IN THE CASE OF THE GOI REQUEST FOR
A TOW ANTI-TANK MISSILE CONTRACTOR BRIEFING AND THE POTENTIAL
FOLLOW-ON SALE OF THE SYSTEM TO INDIA. WE WOULD CONTEND THAT
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SUCH A SALE WOULD BE CONSISTENT BOTH WITH OUR GOALS AND OB-
JECTIVES IN INDIA AND OUR BROADER CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER
POLICY. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT TO REBUFF INDIAN INTEREST IN
THE TOW AT THIS POINT WOULD BE POTENTIALLY DAMAGING TO INDO-
US RELATIONS.

2. U.S. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES. AMONG OUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

IN INDIA APPROVED BY THE NSC AND ALL INTERESTED USG DEPARTMENTS IS THE ACHIEVING OF A BETTER BALANCE IN INDIA'S SECURITY RELATIONSHIPS. SPECIFICALLY, WE ARE ENJOINED "CONSISTENT WITH THE RESTRAINTS OF OUR GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ARMS TRANSFER POLICIES (TO) BE OPEN TO INDIAN INTEREST IN DIVERSIFYING ITS SOURCES FOR MILITARY SUPPLIES, INCLUDING LIMITED DIRECT SALES." AS WE NOTED IN AN EARLIER MESSAGE ON THE TOW (REF B), WE BELIEVE THAT SOVIET GAINS IN AFGHANISTAN HAVE UNDERScoreD THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS GOAL. WE HOLD THAT THE DEFENSIVE NATURE OF THE TOW, THE FACT THAT IT DOES NOT REPRESENT INTRODUCTION OF A HIGHER LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY INTO THE REGION, AND THE HIGH LEVEL AT WHICH INDIAN INTEREST IN IT HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO USG ATTENTION ALL ARGUE IN FAVOR OF AS POSITIVE A RESPONSE TO THIS INTEREST AS POSSIBLE. (IN THIS LAST CONNECTION, WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE INDIANS WILL RAISE THE ISSUE WITH GENERAL ROGERS WHEN HE MAKES HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO DELHI NEXT MONTH. THIS IS FURTHER REASON TO MAKE A PROMPT AND FAVORABLE DECISION ON THE REQUEST FOR CONTRACTOR BRIEFING.)

3. PAKISTAN. WE ALSO CONTEND THAT INDIAN AWARENESS OF OUR PREVIOUS SALE OF TOW'S TO PAKISTAN WOULD INEVITABLY HEIGHTEN GOI DISMAY SHOULD WE REBUFF ITS INTEREST IN THIS SYSTEM. IF THE INDIANS ARE ALSO AWARE, AS THEY MAY WELL BE, THAT DELIVERY OF TOW MISSILES AND LAUNCHERS TO PAKISTAN WAS SPECIALLY EXPEDITED BY HIGH-LEVEL INTERVENTION, THIS CAN ONLY FURTHER CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR ADVERSE REACTION TO SUCH A REBUFF. WE RECOG-
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NIZE, OF COURSE, THAT OUR REGIONAL CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER POLICY DOES NOT MEAN THAT SALE OF A SYSTEM TO ONE SUBCONTINENTAL COUNTRY NECESSARILY SIGNIFIES A WILLINGNESS ON OUR PART TO MAKE IT AVAILABLE TO THE OTHER. EACH POTENTIAL TRANSFER MUST BE ASSESSED IN THE LIGHT OF OVERALL POLICY. NEVERTHELESS, WE EXPECT THAT IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO PERSUADE THE INDIANS OF THE "EVENHANDEDNESS" OF OUR APPROACH IF WE TURN DOWN THE GOI ON THE TOW AFTER HAVING MADE IT PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT ITEM IN OUR POST-EMBARGO SALES PROGRAM IN PAKISTAN.

4. WE RECOGNIZE THE FORCE OF CINCPAC'S CONTENTION THAT THE BALANCE OF SUBCONTINENTAL MILITARY POWER WEIGHS HEAVILY IN INDIA'S FAVOR AT THIS TIME AND THAT ITS CURRENT ANTI-TANK CAPABILITY IS SIGNIFICANT. IT SEEMS TO US, HOWEVER, THAT A SIMILAR ARGUMENT COULD BE LEVELLED AGAINST VIRTUALLY ANY PROPOSED CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER TO INDIA, THUS NEGATING ALMOST ALL EFFORTS ON OUR PART TO BE RESPONSIVE TO GOI REQUESTS. MOREOVER, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT AT PRESENT INDIA'S PRINCIPAL ANTI-TANK MISSILE IS THE SS11B1, A FIRST GENERATION MISSILE. IT IS ONLY NATURAL FOR INDIA TO WISH TO ACQUIRE A SECOND GENERATION MISSILE SUCH AS THE TOW, PARTICULARLY SINCE

THIS IS ALREADY IN THE PAK ARSENAL.

5. IN ARGUING FOR A REVIEW AT THIS TIME, CINCPAC HAS RECOMMENDED THAT INDIAN INTENTIONS REGARDING THE TOW BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN SUCH A STUDY. THESE INTENTIONS ARE NOT CLEAR TO US, NOR CAN WE BE SURE THAT THE INDIANS HAVE REALLY THOUGHT MATTERS THROUGH. (WE ARE NOT CERTAIN, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE INDIANS ARE INTERESTED IN FOLLOW-ON CO-PRODUCTION AGREEMENTS. THEY ARE AWARE, OF COURSE, OF OUR POLICY ON CO-PRODUCTION, CONVEYED TO THEM LAST YEAR.) IN LIGHT OF THESE UNCERTAINTIES WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE MUCH BETTER TO MOVE FORWARD ON THE CONTRACTOR BRIEFING AND SEE WHERE THIS LEADS, RATHER THAN TO TRY TO COME TO ANY FIRM POLICY DECISION AT THIS TIME.

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6. WE WOULD HOPE THAT YOU WOULD TAKE THE FOREGOING INTO SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION, REEXAMINE YOUR POSITION REGARDING HOLDING IN ABEYANCE OF THE CONTRACTOR BRIEFING, AND ACCEPT OUR POSITIVE RECOMMENDATION CONVEYED IN REF C.
GOHEEN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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